On the Record

Report of
The Library of Congress Working Group on
The Future of Bibliographic Control

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Introduction

- Climate at LC and on the Hill
- Time of Transition
- Spring 2006 announcement of Series Authority practices change
- My Response

Formation of Working Group

- 3 representatives each from ALA and ARL
- 1 each from SLA, AALL, MLA, NFAIS, PCC, Google, Microsoft
- At-large members from CNI, OCLC
- Co-chaired by José -Marie Griffiths (UNC SLIS) and Olivia Madison (Iowa State University)

The Happy Band

Tasks

- Present findings on how bibliographic control and other descriptive practices can effectively support management of and access to library materials in the evolving information and technology environment

- Recommend ways in which the library community can collectively move toward achieving this vision

- Advise the Library of Congress on its role and priorities

Meeting Schedule

- First met at LC in November 2006

- Decided to hold three regional hearings
  - Users and Uses of Bibliographic Data (Google)
  - Structures and Standards for Bibliographic Data (ALA)
  - Economics and Organization of Bibliographic Data (LC)

Ambitious Follow-Through

- Public comment until July 31, 2007

- Met in San Diego in August 2007 (without LC)

- "Interim Draft Report and Recommendations" => Live Webcast presentation of the draft report to LC staff: November 13, 2007

- Final Report delivered, January 2008

Audience of the Report

- Library of Congress

- Current and potential participants in the bibliographic sphere

- Policy makers and decision makers who influence the scope of operations and constraints upon participating organizations

OTR: PROGENITORS

- Brian E.C. Schottlaender, ed. *The Future of the Descriptive Cataloging Rules: Papers from the ALCTS Preconference, AACR 2000* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1998).

- *LC21: A Digital Strategy for the Library of Congress* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 2000).

- *Bibliographic Control of Web Resources: A Library of Congress Action Plan* (2001). http://www.loc.gov/catdir/bibcontrol/actionplan.html

- Wayne Jones et al., eds. *Cataloging the Web: Metadata, AACR, and MARC 21* (Chicago: American Library Association, 2002).

- University of California Bibliographic Services Task Force. *Rethinking How We Provide Bibliographic Services for the University* (December 2005). http://libraries.universityofcalifornia.edu/sopag/BSTF/Final.pdf

- Karen Calhoun. *The Changing Nature of the Catalog and Its Integration with Other Discovery Tools* (March, 2006).
  http://www.loc.gov/catdir/calhoun-report-final.pdf

- Jackie Byrd et al. *A White Paper on the Future of Cataloging at Indiana University* (2006). http://www.iub.edu/~libtserv/pub/Future_of_Cataloging_White_Paper.pdf

OTR: Guiding Principles

- Redefine Bibliographic Control

- Redefine the Bibliographic Universe

- Redefine the Role of the Library of Congress

OTR: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- REDEFINE BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL

  " … a broad definition of bibliographic control that embraces all library materials, a diverse community of users, and a multiplicity of venues where information is sought ... view bibliographic control as a distributed activity, not a centralized one."

- REDEFINE THE BIBLIOGRAPHIC UNIVERSE

  "Libraries of today need to recognize that they are but one group of players in a vast field, and that market conditions necessitate that libraries interact increasingly with the commercial sector … Rather than relying as heavily as it has on LC, the community needs to acknowledge that in at least some areas, LC may need to be able to rely on the work of others."

- REDEFINE THE ROLE OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

  " … identify areas wherein it [LC] no longer need be the sole provider of bibliographic data and … create partnerships to distribute responsibility for data creation ... consider sharing the standards effort within the community and collaborating with other interested institutions to create a rational and efficient means of managing the standards needed for information exchange."

OTR: Vision

- "The future of bibliographic control will be collaborative, decentralized, international in scope, and Web-based."

- "Libraries must continue the transition to this future without delay in order to retain their significance as information providers."

- "The library community must look beyond individual libraries and toward a system-wide deployment of resources."

OTR: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase the Efficiency of Bibliographic Record Production and Maintenance
2. Enhance Access to Rare, Unique, and Other Special Hidden Materials
3. Position our Technology for the Future
4. Position our Community for the Future
5. Strengthen the Library and Information Science Profession

OTR: Findings and Recommendations

1. **Increase the Efficiency of Bibliographic Record Production and Maintenance**

   "Because the incredible growth in information resources is not matched by a related growth in library funding, it is necessary to re-examine the efficiency with which the work of bibliographic control is performed."

2. **Enhance Access to Rare, Unique, and Other Special Hidden Materials**

   "Processing has never kept up with the acquisition of unique and primary source materials. As a result, there are backlogs of unprocessed collections of these materials at libraries and repositories across the country that are not accessible through the libraries' online discovery tools."

3. **Position our Technology for the Future**

   "Data that are stored in separate library databases often do not disclose themselves to Web applications, and thus do not appear in searches carried out through commonly used search engines. Such data are therefore invisible to information seekers using these Web applications, even though a library's catalog may itself be openly available for use on the Web."

4. **Position our Community for the Future**

   "Libraries have tended to equate bibliographic control with the production of metadata for use solely within the library catalog. This narrow focus is no longer suitable in an environment wherein data from diverse sources are used to create new and interesting information views."

5. **Strengthen the Library and Information Science Profession**

   "As in so many things, education will prove key to the profession's capability to address new challenges in bibliographic control."

OTR: In Summary

- Report presents a vision and broad directions for the future

- It is not a specific implementation plan

- It IS a call to action

Bringing the Vision Home

- Sustaining the momentum
- Validating the assumptions
- Supporting the recommendations
  - Library of Congress
  - Cooperative bodies and associations
  - Institutional contributions

Sustaining the Momentum

- The Working Group began a broad-based dialogue about future of bibliographic control

- Final report is triggering responses (both positive and negative) from diverse groups

- Need to continue the conversation

Validating the Assumptions

- The Working Group developed a collaborative framework, applicable beyond its original mandate
- We are already seeing the assumptions included in that framework validated in various venues, e.g.:
    - CLIR "Hidden Collections" RFP
    - Project Bamboo

Supporting the Recommendations

- Library of Congress
- Cooperative bodies and associations:
  ALCTS, PCC, others
  - ALCTS Task Group Report: 10 actions for ALCTS to address
  http://www.ala.org/ala/alcts/newslinks/bibcontrol/lcwgtop10.cfm
- Institutional contributions
  - Sustain and increase cooperative cataloging
  - Integrate records created to different standards
  - Develop a culture of assessment and user input

Supporting the Recommendations (cont.)

- Institutional contributions (cont.):
  - Uncover hidden collections
  - Invest in digitization
    - Experiment with computationally derived data for access
  - Consider WG recommendations when developing requirements for new library systems
  - Explore different access mechanisms, such as faceted browsers
    - What consequences do these have for metadata creation?

- "Something is better than nothing"
-- if we can build on it

A Manager's Note

- Implement change from a position of strength
  - Invest *before* realizing savings
  - Invest in assessment of new tools and interfaces
- Align organization with highest yield
  - Rationalize job roles
  - Coordinate metadata creation across departments
- Expose metadata creators to new thinking
- Celebrate success

LC's response to OTR

- 3 internal groups provided response to me by May 1, 2008
  - Acquisitions and Bibliographic Access Management Team
  - Strategic Plan Working Group
  - Thomas Mann, Reference Librarian

- I responded in writing to all of the recommendations on June 1 and reported at the ALA annual meeting in Anaheim later that month

Joint Statement on RDA

- RDA work underway and important enough to address earlier rather than later
- Met with NAL & NLM on March 10, 2008
- Decided upon joint approach
- Letter and Statement released on May 1, 2008

From the *Joint Statement*

Together, we will:

- Jointly develop milestones for evaluating how we will implement RDA
- Conduct tests of RDA that determine if each milestone has been reached, paying particular attention to the benefits and costs of implementation
- Widely distribute analyses of benefits and costs for review by the U.S. library community
- Consult with the vendor and bibliographic utility communities to address their concerns about RDA

Special Collections

- Mechanism created for adding Music, Rare Book, and Asian Collections to LC's online catalog => Starting this year

- Plan to add all Special Collections materials over the next several years

LC's Implementation Plans

- Rick Lugg will have a contract to perform environmental scan of bibliographic landscape
- Flickr Pilot Project in Prints & Photographs Division is LC's first foray into Web 2.0
- Regina Reynolds and Bruce Knarr will lead small group undertaking pilot projects in multiple areas
- RDA testing underway with NAL & NLM

Communications

- Progress report to community at ALA Midwinter Meeting in January 2009
- Upcoming article in *Library of Congress Information Bulletin*

Access the Working Group's Report and My Response

http://www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future/